

Woods misses cut at Riviera; Cantlay and McDowell lead

SPORTS, 11B

DA Flippo to retire at end of 7th term

He's worked with the office for 40 years

Joe Szydlowski
Salinas Californian
USA TODAY NETWORK

Monterey County District Attorney Dean Flippo will retire in January at the end of his seventh term.

The county's longest-serving DA announced his decision Friday after a total of 40 years with the office, 27 of them as

its leader, and more time crisscrossing the country as a student, a U.S. Army lawyer, private attorney and prosecutor in Michigan.

That includes a time that his wife's inkling - that a defense attorney's contention regarding a shooter's line of sight was incorrect - led him to lie on the floor with a Ruger 30-06 rifle to prove a murder in a trial.



Dean Flippo

In Flippo's time at the DA's office, he presided over many cases, fought the growing gang problem as well as tried to curb truancy via an early intervention program.

Born, raised and educated in the Eastern United States, including as an undergrad at the College of Williams and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., and law school at Wayne State University in Detroit, Flippo said he started

out his legal career in the Judge Advocate General's Corps at the Presidio of San Francisco.

But high-profile cases in the midst of the Vietnam War meant JAG trials were sometimes moved to Monterey County, and that's how Flippo found his future home, he said.

A former colleague helped convince him, along with a post-Army return to Michigan's frigid winters, he said.

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Salinas Boxing Club keeps serving kids



Trainer Robert Medrano, left, trains dozens of kids in the Salinas Boxing Club. Medrano took over operation of the club in 2013. PHOTOS BY AYRTON OSTLY/THE CALIFORNIAN

Duo took over, brought club from dark times

Ayrton Ostly Salinas Californian | USA TODAY NETWORK

It's late afternoon and a deep orange falls over Closter Park in east Salinas as the sun sets.

The basketball courts are full of the sounds of dribbling and shouts for foul calls.

Children play games on the fields, while mothers with strollers circle around the park in the unseasonal February warmth.

In the far corner of the park, two men watch a tight cluster of kids run.

"A little while ago, someone drove by and fired shots into the park," Salinas Boxing Club president Robert Medrano said. "But we're still out here."

Through the hard work and dedication of Medrano and Robert Avila, the duo have brought the Salinas Box-



Robert Avila, right, helps one of the newer kids in their conditioning. Avila's been working at the club for three years after coaching football with Medrano.

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DA: Man admits to killing pastor

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A man accused of slaying a well-known Salinas pastor in 2017 pleaded guilty as the jury deliberated in his trial, according to the Monterey County District Attorney's Office.

Servando Silva, 39, pleaded guilty to a second-degree murder charge in the death of Pastor Herbert Valero as well as felony assault against his

brother, prosecutors said in a press release.

He also admitted to an enhancement and a strike for prior convictions, prosecutors said.

Silva allegedly went to Valero's home to meet with the pastor at about 8 p.m., prosecutors say. Valero agreed to meet with Silva. "Within minutes, while (Valero) was mid-sentence stating he was 'Silva's) friend and that he could help,' Silva stabbed the pastor in the neck with a drywall saw blade," prosecutors wrote in the press release.

Silva had cut Valero's carotid artery

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Pastor Herbert Valero served as senior pastor at the Salinas Victory Outreach Church.

PROVIDED/GONZALEZ FAMILY

Residents learn how to create a safer community

Eduardo Cuevas
Special to Salinas Californian
USA TODAY NETWORK

Close to 50 Eastside residents drank cafe de olla and ate pan dulce inside the gymnasium of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Academy Thursday night as Salinas police officers and volunteers explained how neighborhood watches can help create safer communities.

The event, "One Neighborhood at a Time," was organized by the city's Neighborhood Services program and was the fifth presentation for the City of Salinas' "Building Strong Neighborhoods" series.

Salinas police volunteer Kevin Low and Sgt. Kendall Gray gave an hour-long powerpoint presentation followed by a question-and-answer segment.

In it, Low provided his insights as a

South Salinas resident active in his own neighborhood watch and the different ways in which neighbors can organize. He has participated in neighborhood watch presentations as a police volunteer for three years.

"It's just getting to know other people and partnering with other families and making your neighborhood safer," Low said, adding that neighborhood watches help identify suspicious or criminal ac-

tivity in the community.

An interpreter walked along the aisles of people seated in attendance, translating through a small microphone that Spanish speakers heard through headphones.

Six other police officers also attended, though several left towards the end of the meeting for a dispatch. Parents

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